Cargo terminal at IGIA

2647. SHRI TARA CHARAN MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Cargo terminal at Indira Gandhi International Airport has started in full swing;

(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn to certain reports indicating that exporters' associations complaining that export operations had come' to a near standstill;

(c) if so, the details of conflicting reports; and

(d) the time by when the cargo terminal at IGI Airport will commence its normal working?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING) SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Reports appeared in certain newspapers which alleged that the export operations at Air Cargo Unit, IGI Airport have come to standstill due to collapse of computer system. The computerised processing of the export documents pertaining to duty free goods and for Drawback at the Air Cargo Unit IGI Airport under the Delhi Customs commenced with effect from 3.6.1996 and 1.11.1996 respectively. Due to' the changeover from manual to computerised system the number of documents cleared in the first few days was less than the normal output. To meet the exact requirements of the computerised system, the documents received from exporters had been returned. However, the system has stabilised and is working satisfactorily.

Hunger strike by insurance employees

2648. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the insurance employees all over the country observed 24 hours hunger strike on 27th November, 1996;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and financial loss suffered by Government on this account;

(c) whether Government propose to lake some steps to redress the grievances of insurance employees; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (d) Some of the Class III & Class IV employees of insurance industry observed 24 hours hunger strike on 27th November, 1996 at selected centres. The strike was observed to protest against the proposed Bill for making Insurance Regulatory Authority as a Statutory body. As reported by the LIC and GIC no financial loss has been suffered on . account of the hunger strike. The management had notified to the employees that absence from office for participating in the strike would be treated as unauthorised and wage deduction will be affected on the principle of No-Work No-Pay'.

News-item regarding SBI slipping into foreign hands

2649. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a group of banking experts have urged Government to 'save' the State Bank of India from slipping into foreign hands as reported in The statesman, dated 16th October, 1996;

(b) whether Government shares the opinion of these experts, if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether a demand has been made for amendment of SBI Act to limit the equity holding by foreign institutional investors at 20 per cent and if other amendments have been suggested the details of the same; and